

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 059456
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY AF/S:WFEATON:PS
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AF/S:FGWISNER
S/S:MR. SEBASTIAN
AF/E - MR. POST

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-----171711Z 084363 /56

O 171642Z MAR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 059456

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TZ, RH, BC

SUBJECT: NYERERE PROPOSAL FOR TIGHTENING RHODESIAN SANCTIONS

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 1102

1. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT NYERERE'S SUGGESTION THAT WE
TALK WITH KHAMA ABOUT TIGHTENING SANCTIONS ON RHODESIA
WITH THE US OFFERING TO COMPENSATE BOTSWANA FOR ITS RESULT-

SECRET

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PAGE 02 STATE 059456

ANT ECONOMIC LOSSES IS A NON-STARTER. KHAMA HAS NOT RAISED
THIS MATTER WITH US AND WE DO NOT FAVOR A US INITIATIVE
IN THIS DIRECTION. WE AGREE WITH KHAMA'S REMARK IN 1976
THAT CLOSING THE BOTSWANA BORDER WITH RHODESIA WOULD CAUSE
BOTSWANA TO HURT ITSELF MORE THAN IT WOULD HURT RHODESIA.

2. AT PRESENT ONLY ABOUT 20 PER CENT OF RHODESIAN RAIL

TRAFFIC PASSES THROUGH BOTSWANA. RHODESIA COULD PROBABLY INCREASE TRAFFIC ON ITS DIRECT RAIL LINK TO SOUTH AFRICA TO MAKE UP FOR THE LOSS OF THE BOTSWANA LINK. FOR BOTSWANA CLOSURE OF BORDER WOULD CREATE VERY SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS. BOTSWANA IS HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON THE RAILROAD WHICH IS RUN BY RHODESIA. BOTSWANA'S MAIN FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNERS, COPPER-NICKEL MATTE AND BEEF, MOVE BY RAIL. TO MAINTAIN THE RAILROAD AFTER CLOSURE OF THE BORDER, AN ESTIMATED \$70 MILLION WOULD BE NEEDED TO PURCHASE ROLLING STOCK AND ABOUT 500 EXPATRIATE TECHNICIANS

AND MANAGERS WOULD BE REQUIRED. THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT ECONOMIC COST WOULD BE SUCH AS TO REQUIRE A MAJOR MULTILATERAL EFFORT. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT BOTSWANA WOULD BECOME MORE HEAVILY DEPENDENT UPON SOUTH AFRICA.

3. THE FOREGOING IS FOR YOUR INFO ONLY. SHOULD THE SUBJECT COME UP AGAIN, YOU SHOULD SAY THAT OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE COSTS TO BOTSWANA OR RAILROAD CLOSURE GREATLY EXCEED THE DAMAGE WHICH WOULD RESULT IN RHODESIA. THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT, AWARE OF THE SITUATION AND PROBLEMS INVOLVED, IS NOT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, PURSUING RAIL CLOSURE.

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